DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 105 052 UD 015 044

AUTHOR Davis, Lenwood G.
TITLE A History of Black Religion in Southern Areas: A Preliminary Survey.
INSTITUTION Council of Planning Librarians, Monticello, Ill.
REPORT NO CPL-EB-733
PUB DATE Jan 75
NOTE 14p.; Best Copy Available
AVAILABLE FROM Council of Planning Librarians, Box 229, Monticello, Illinois 51856 ($1.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Bibliographies; Book Lists; *Church Role; Civil Rights; Negro Culture; *Negro History; Negro Institutions; Negro Leadership; Periodicals; Reference Books; *Religious Factors; Scholarly Journals; Slavery; *Southern States; Surveys

ABSTRACT

In his introduction to this bibliography--which is organized into sections dealing with selected general reference works, selected black periodicals, and books--the compiler notes that this work is appropriate because a distinction should be made between the religion of Blacks in the North and the religion of Blacks in the South. There is also a difference between the early religious experiences of Blacks during the slave days and those Blacks living in the North during the same period. Many of the books listed make references to the religious conversions. The compiler contends that, historically, religion and the church have been the two major entities that have kept Black people and the Black community together. During slavery many Blacks expressed themselves in many ways to show their belief in God. Many of the early Black leaders were deeply religious men and women. Even during contemporary times, the most articulated Black leaders were and are religious men and women. The outstanding Black leader of modern times was a Southern Baptist minister--Martin Luther King, Jr. The compiler asserts that the epitaph of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life shows us the way to solve out problems and destroy the chains of racial segregation and discrimination and live like brothers in this great world of ours. (Author/JM)

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A HISTORY OF BLACK RELIGION IN SOUTHERN AREAS: A PRELIMINARY SURVEY

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by

Lenwood G. Davis
Department of Black Studies
Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

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INTRODUCTION

This work is appropriated because a distinction should be made between the religion of Blacks in the North and the religion of Blacks in the South. There is also a difference between the early religious experiences of Blacks during the slave days and those Blacks living in the North during the same period. Many of the books listed make references to the religious conversions of the slaves.

Historically, religion and the church have been the two major entities that have kept Black people and the Black community together.

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During slavery many Blacks expressed themselves in many ways to show their belief in God. Some expressed themselves through songs, hymns, spirituals, and gospel music. Others expressed themselves through prayers and church services. Still, others attempted to "live a Christian life," by not hating their masters or committing bodily harm to them.

Many of the early Black leaders were deeply religious men and women. Consequently, they were surrounded by other deeply religious men and women. Even during contemporary times, the most articulated Black leaders were and are religious men and women. The most outstanding Black leader of modern times was a Southern Baptist minister - Martin Luther King, Jr. Rev. King gave spiritual as well as moral dynamic to western civilization. He, more than any Black individual has done more to bring about love and brotherhood between the Black and white than any other person in this century. He, more than any other person tried to bring harmony among the races. Martin Luther King, Jr., himself, stated how he wanted to be remembered: that he tried to give his life serving others...that he tried to love somebody...that he tried to love and save humanity....

So Martin Luther King, Jr. has something important to say to each of us in his death. He has something to say to every racist who has convinced his constituent to believe that one man is superior to another. He has something to say to the man who remains silent and knows in his heart that he should speak out. He has something to say to a nation

that preaches love and brotherhood and practices hatred and bigotry. Rev. King has something to say to the white and the Black, not only in the United States but the whole world. He, himself, gave the answer to the problem of the world, when he declared: "Nonviolence, the answer to the Negroes' need, may become the answer to the most desperate need of all humanity."

Thus the epitaph of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life shows us the way to solve our problem and destroy the chains of racial segregation and discrimination and live like brothers in this great world of ours.

Many of our present day leaders are religious men such as Rev. Ralph Abernathy and Rev. Jesse Jackson and they had their roots in the South. Moreover, many of our present day young leaders are from the Southern part of the United States and all of them come from a religious background - Maynard Jackson, Julian Bond, and Rev. Andrew Young - to name a few.

It should be noted that some of the books listed apply to the religious conversion of Blacks living in the North. Consequently, there will be some overlapping. Hence, some of the book lists will not directly apply to religion in the South. Nevertheless, they still are useful because they supply background material for the study of the transformation of Blacks and their religious teaching and training in the South.

Obviously, any work of this endeavor encompassed the assistance of many people and many hours. Therefore, it would be nearly impossible to name all persons that assisted in this monumental work, however, I must express special acknowledgement to the following: The Ohio State University Library, and the secretaries, Penny Martin, Judie Strain, and Yolanda Robinson of the Department of Black Studies at The Ohio State University. Without their assistance this work would not have been completed. I take full responsibility, however, for all errors. I also welcome any corrections of errors or omissions.

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